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MEGA MAN™ | 54
SPAZ

IN THE YEAR 20XX, A SUPER ROBOT NAMED MEGA MAN HAS PLEDGED TO STOP THE EVIL DESIRES OF DR.WILY AND PROTECT THE WORLD. MEGA MAN NOW FIGHTS ALONGSIDE HIS FELLOW ROBOT MASTERS TO DEFEAT THE FORCES OF EVIL!

CHARACTER SELECT

BREAK MAN
DR. LIGHT'S FIRST SON

SHADOW MAN
NINJA ROBOT MASTER

DR. ALBERT WILY
TENACIOUS MADMAN

DR. NOELE LALINDE
CREATOR OF QUAKE WOMAN

MEGA MAN™

PREVIOUSLY...

Blues was built as the first thinking, human-like robot—a prototype to all **Robot Masters**, and **Dr. Light's** first "son." A faulty power core threatened to destroy him, but Blues feared any modifications would change who he was. So he ran away from home.

Blues was eventually found and repaired by **Dr. Wily**, taking on the identity of **Break Man**. Dr. Wily has repeatedly played upon Break Man's fears and doubts, frequently pitting Break Man against **Mega Man**.

Mega Man and Dr. Wily's last battle ended up destroying the mad scientist's third **Wily Castle** base. Break Man managed to rescue his estranged brother...

but it looked like Dr. Wily was
lost to the rubble...

SCRIPT: IAN FLYNN PENCILS: RYAN JAMPOLE INKS: GARY MARTIN
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MEGA MAN™ (ISSN: 2157-6866), No. 54, December, 2015. Published monthly by Archie Comic Publications, Inc., 629 Fifth Avenue, Suite 100, Pelham, NY 10803-1242. Jon Goldwater, Publisher/Co-CEO. Nancy Silberkleit, Co-CEO. Mike Pellerito, President. Victor Gorelick, Co-President. Single copies $3.99. Subscription rate: $47.88 for 12 issues. All Canadian orders payable in U.S. funds.

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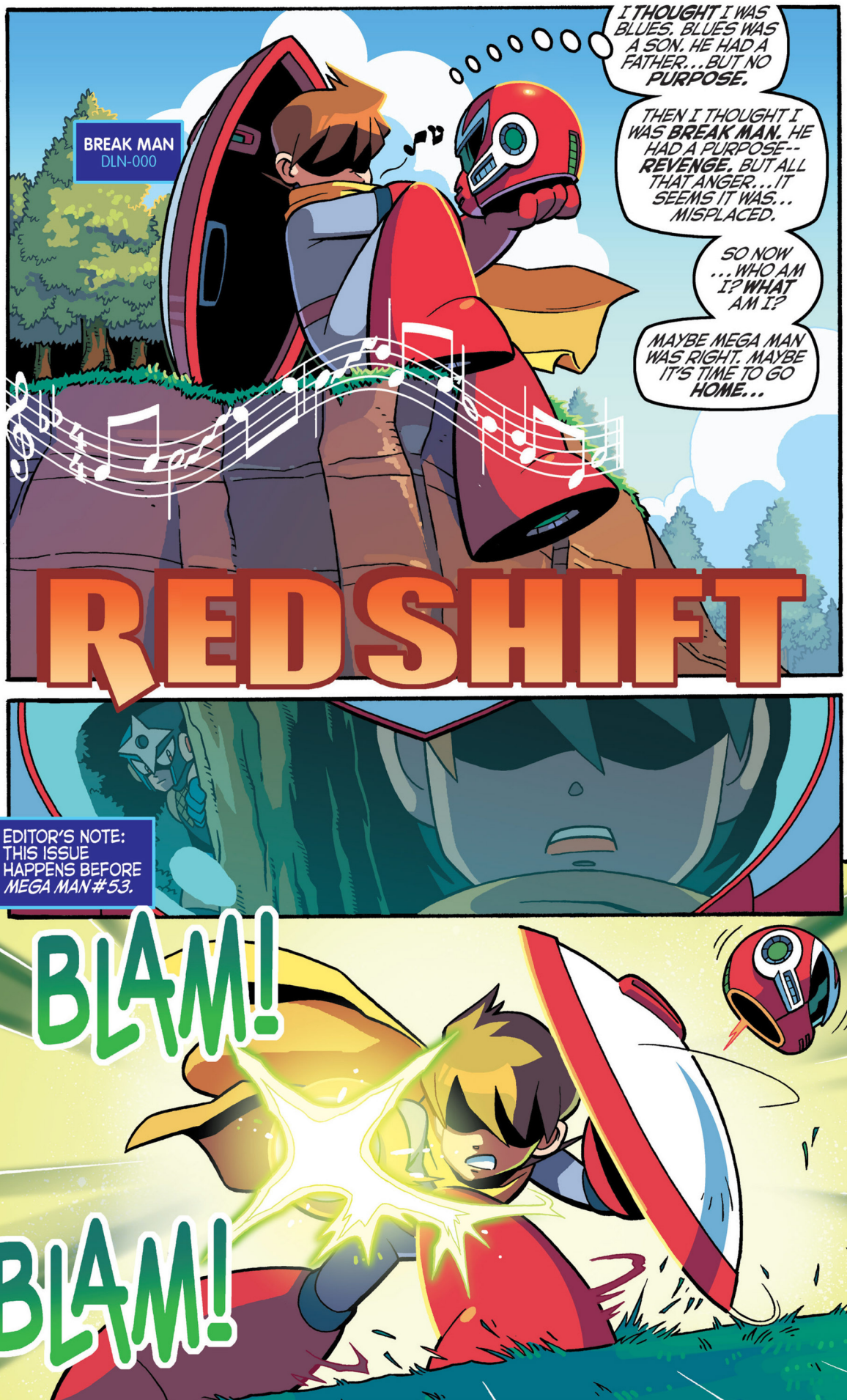
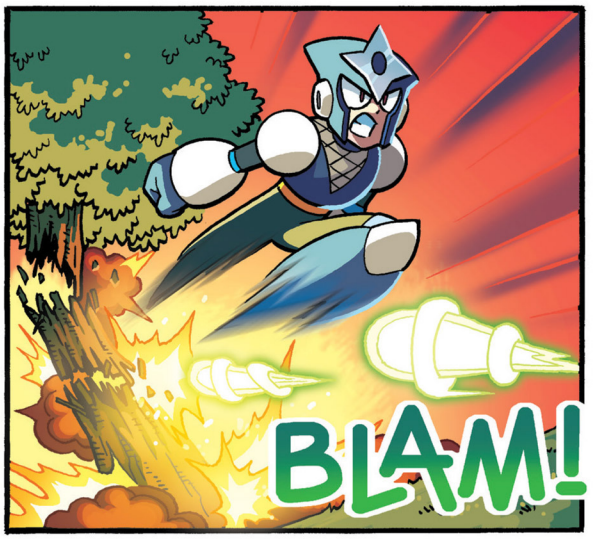
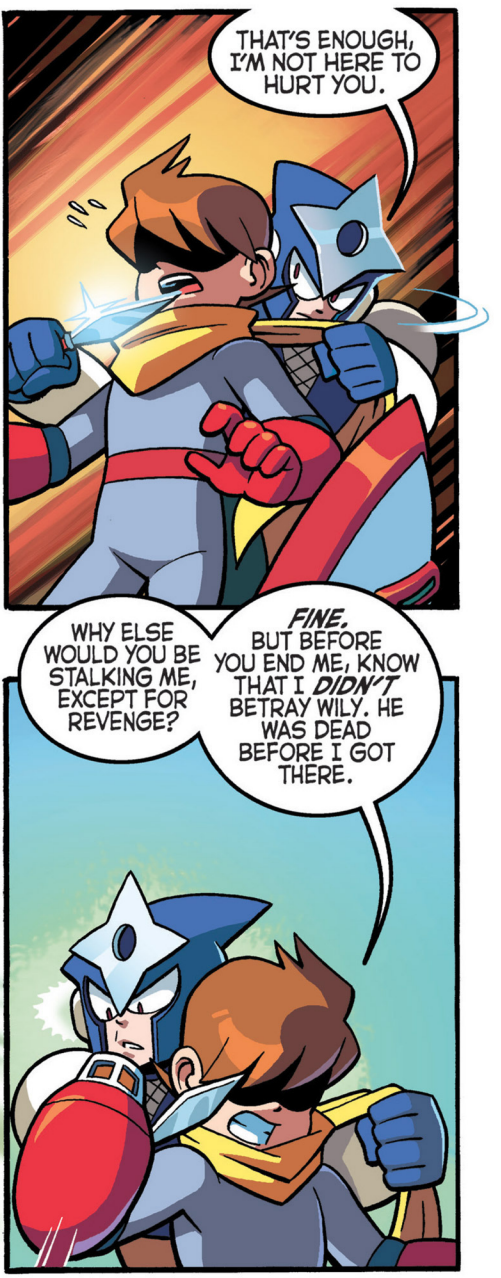

BREAK MAN
DLN-000
I THOUGHT I WAS BLUES. BLUES WAS A SON. HE HAD A FATHER...BUT NO PURPOSE.
THEN I THOUGHT I WAS BREAK MAN. HE HAD A PURPOSE--REVENGE. BUT ALL THAT ANGER...IT SEEMS IT WAS...MISPLACED.
SO NOW ...WHO AM I? WHAT AM I?
MAYBE MEGA MAN WAS RIGHT. MAYBE IT'S TIME TO GO HOME...
REDSHIFT
EDITOR'S NOTE: THIS ISSUE HAPPENS BEFORE MEGA MAN #53.
BLAM!
BLAM!

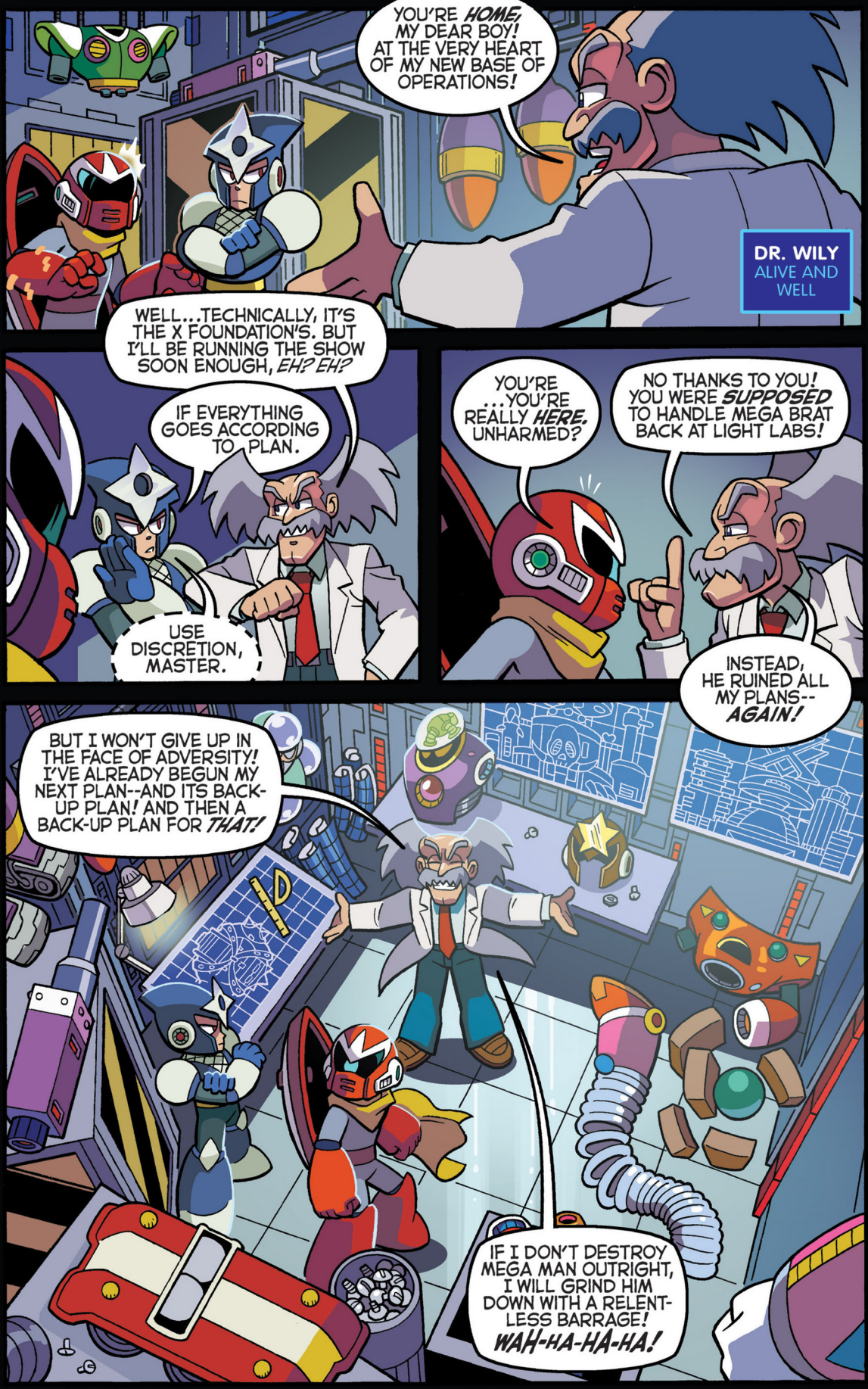

BLAM!

SHRRK!

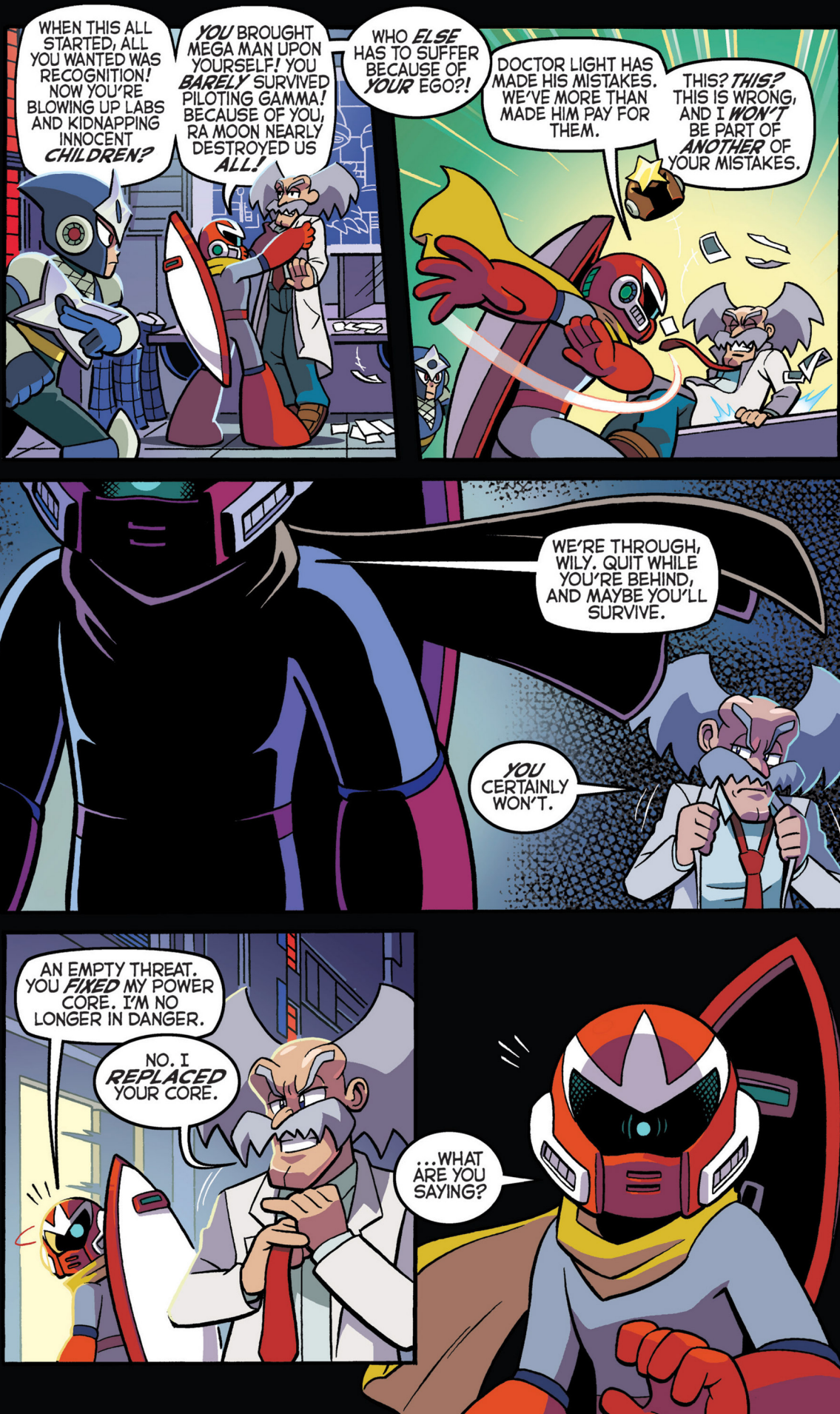
SHADOW MAN
NINJA & WILY LOYALIST
BLAM!


THAT'S ENOUGH, I'M NOT HERE TO HURT YOU.
WHY ELSE WOULD YOU BE STALKING ME, EXCEPT FOR REVENGE?
FINE. BUT BEFORE YOU END ME, KNOW THAT I DIDN'T BETRAY WILY. HE WAS DEAD BEFORE I GOT THERE.

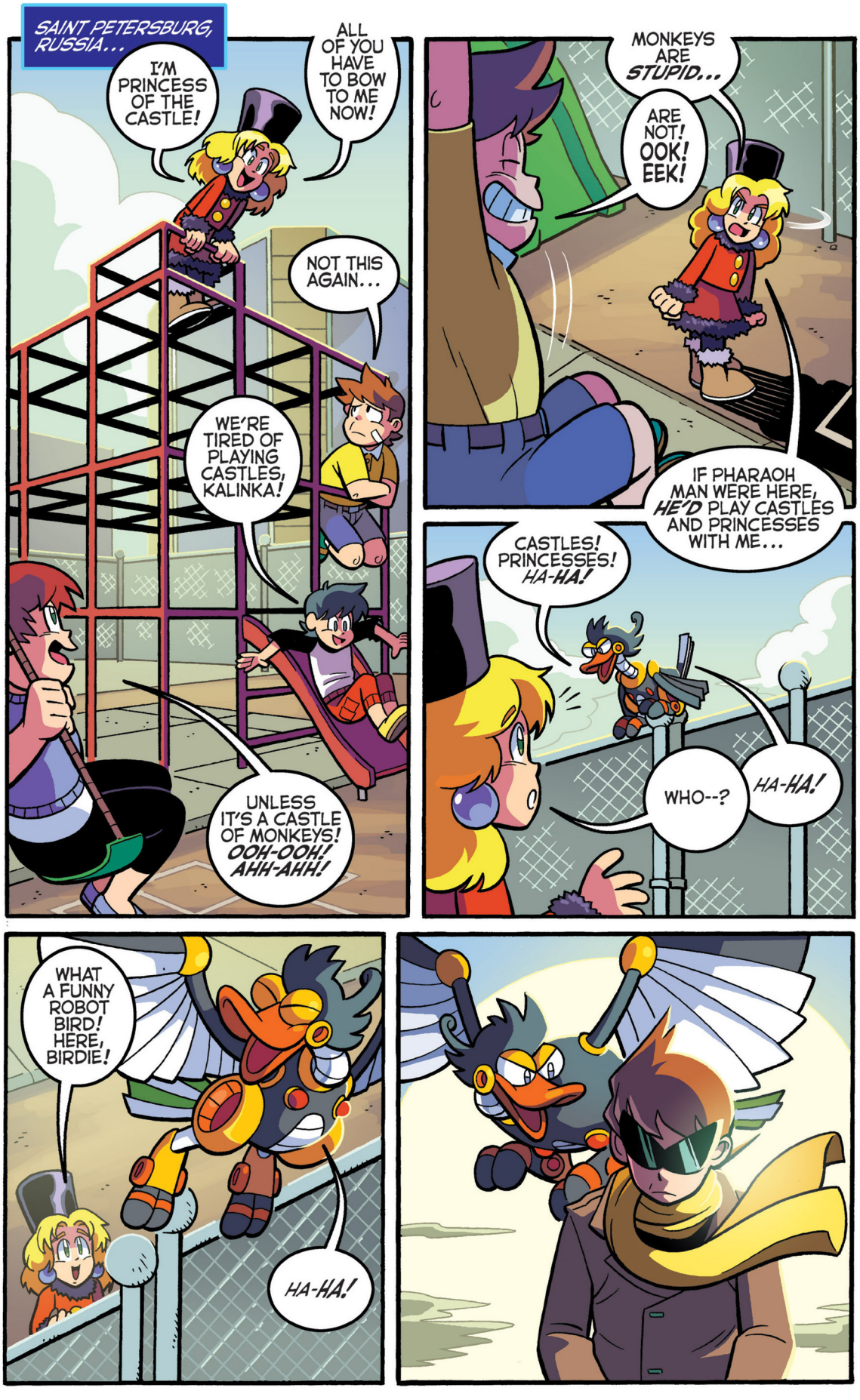
I KNOW. I'M HERE BECAUSE DR. WILY ORDERED ME TO COLLECT YOU.
...HE'S ALIVE? THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE. I SAW...
SAVE IT. HE'LL EXPLAIN EVERYTHING WHEN WE RETURN TO BASE. I'M PROGRAMMING THE TELEPORT SIGNAL'S COORDINATES NOW.
WHO ELSE KNOWS?
ONLY US.
BWOO-WIP!
BWOO-WIP!
...WHERE ARE WE?

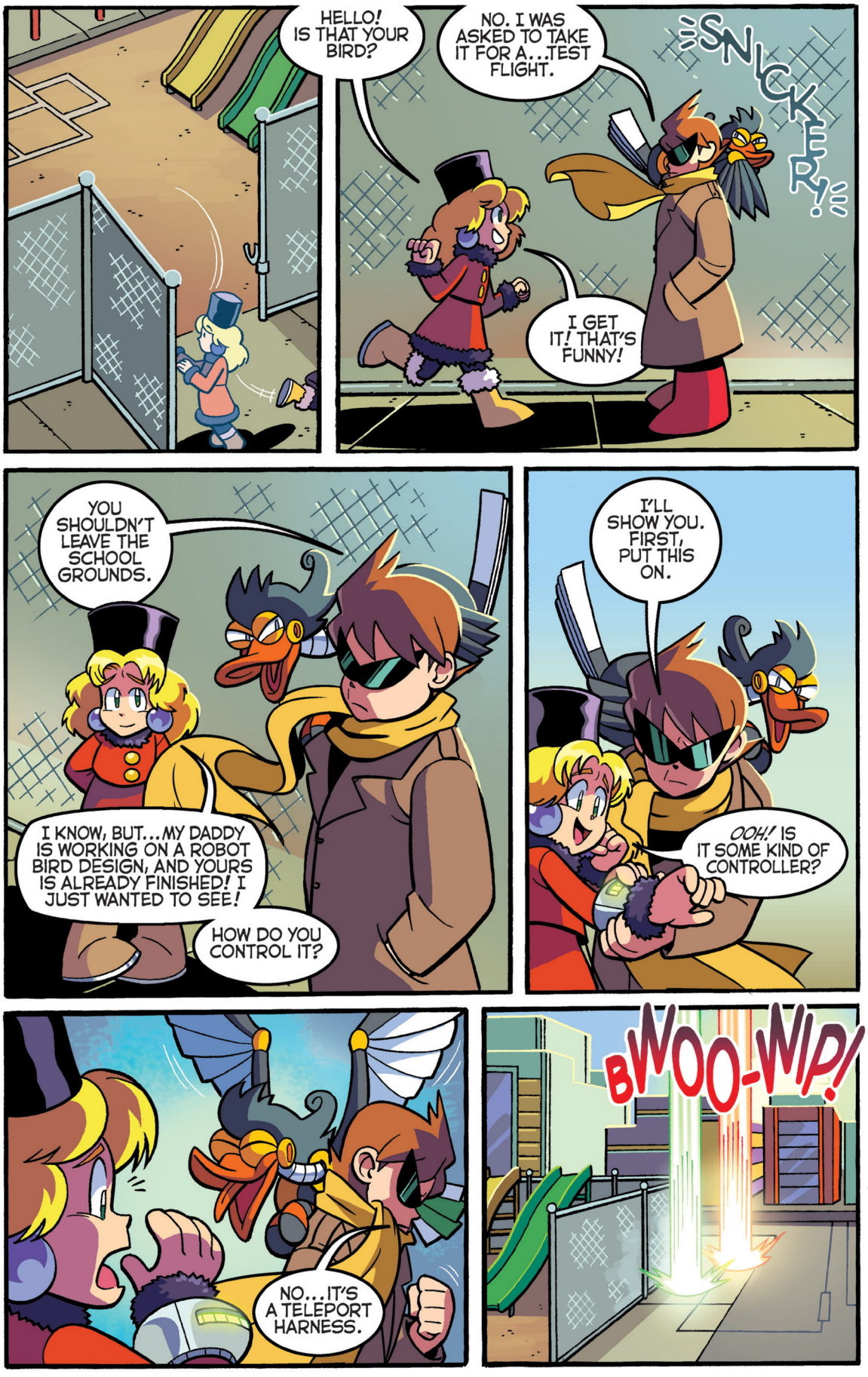

YOU'RE HOME, MY DEAR BOY! AT THE VERY HEART OF MY NEW BASE OF OPERATIONS!
DR. WILY ALIVE AND WELL
WELL...TECHNICALLY, IT'S THE X FOUNDATION'S. BUT I'LL BE RUNNING THE SHOW SOON ENOUGH, EH? EH?
IF EVERYTHING GOES ACCORDING TO PLAN.
USE DISCRETION, MASTER.
YOU'RE...YOU'RE REALLY HERE. UNHARMED?
NO THANKS TO YOU! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO HANDLE MEGA BRAT BACK AT LIGHT LABS!
INSTEAD, HE RUINED ALL MY PLANS-- AGAIN!
BUT I WON'T GIVE UP IN THE FACE OF ADVERSITY! I'VE ALREADY BEGUN MY NEXT PLAN--AND ITS BACK-UP PLAN! AND THEN A BACK-UP PLAN FOR THAT!
IF I DON'T DESTROY MEGA MAN OUTRIGHT, I WILL GRIND HIM DOWN WITH A RELENTLESS BARRAGE! WAH-HA-HA-HA!

YOU'RE CERTAINLY... AMBITIOUS.
AND VENGEFUL, MY BOY! SOMETHING I KNOW YOU CAN GET BEHIND!
I'VE EMBARRASSED THOMAS THOROUGHLY, SO HE GETS A PASS FOR NOW. NEXT ON THE AGENDA IS THAT CONDESCENDING JERK MIKHAIL!
DOCTOR COSSACK?
OH-HO-HO, YES! HE'LL PAY FOR ALL HIS SNIDE REMARKS!
ALL THOSE JUDGMENTAL GLARES! AND I'LL GET MEGA MAN TO PULL THE TRIGGER! HEH-HEH-HEH!
I DON'T UNDERSTAND.
YOU DON'T NEED TO! YOU JUST BE A GOOD LITTLE SOLDIER AND FOLLOW ORDERS. MAKE UP FOR YOUR PAST FAILURES...
...BY BRINGING ME KALINKA COSSACK.
ARE YOU CRAZY?!

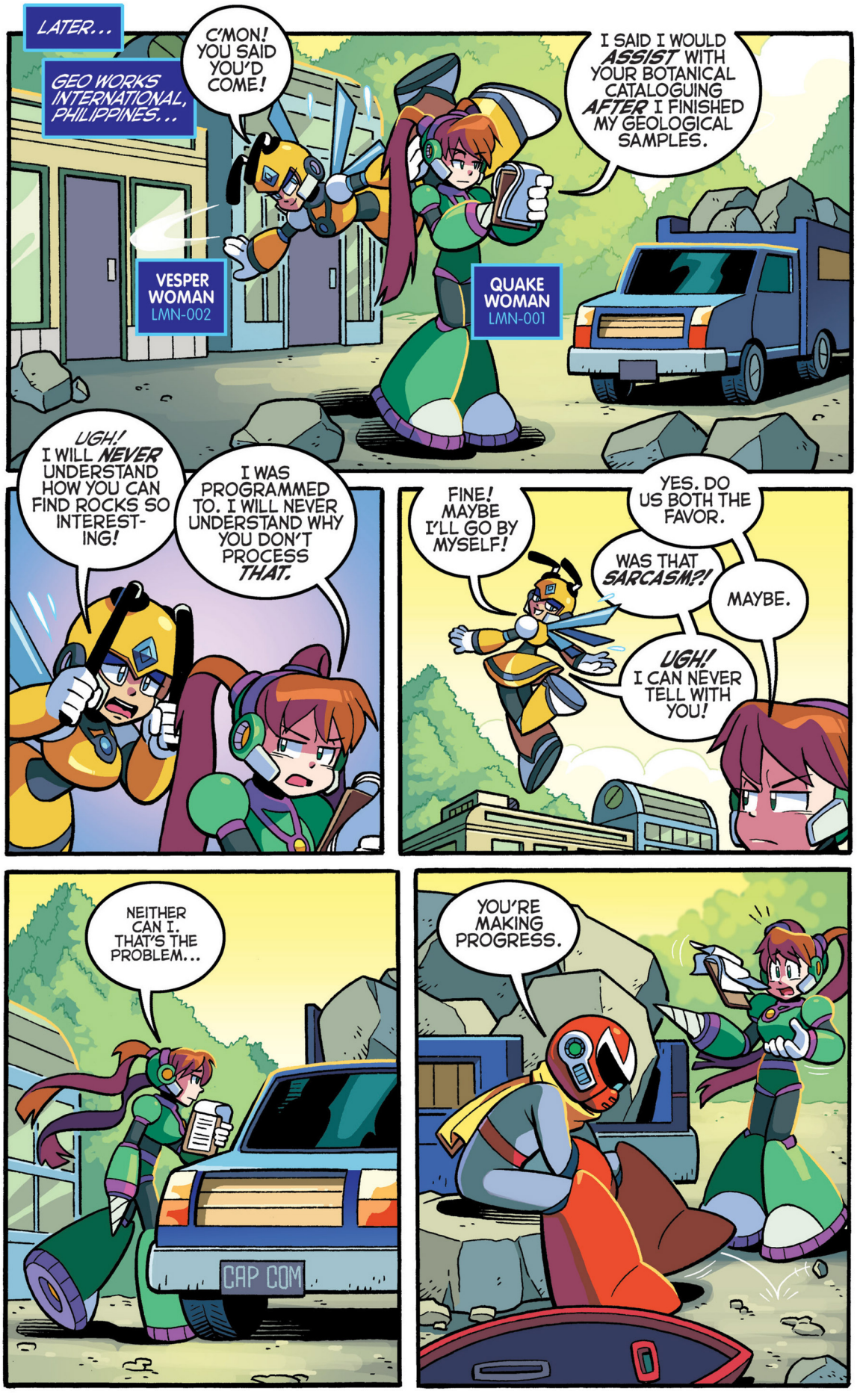

WHEN THIS ALL STARTED, ALL YOU WANTED WAS RECOGNITION! NOW YOU'RE BLOWING UP LABS AND KIDNAPPING INNOCENT CHILDREN?
YOU BROUGHT MEGA MAN UPON YOURSELF! YOU BARELY SURVIVED PILOTING GAMMA! BECAUSE OF YOU, RA MOON NEARLY DESTROYED US ALL!
WHO ELSE HAS TO SUFFER BECAUSE OF YOUR EGO?!
DOCTOR LIGHT HAS MADE HIS MISTAKES. WE'VE MORE THAN MADE HIM PAY FOR THEM.
THIS? THIS? THIS IS WRONG, AND I WON'T BE PART OF ANOTHER OF YOUR MISTAKES.
WE'RE THROUGH, WILY. QUIT WHILE YOU'RE BEHIND, AND MAYBE YOU'LL SURVIVE.
YOU CERTAINLY WON'T.
AN EMPTY THREAT. YOU FIXED MY POWER CORE. I'M NO LONGER IN DANGER.
NO. I REPLACED YOUR CORE.
...WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?

I'M SAYING I REMEMBER YOUR LITTLE HISSY-FIT--WHEN YOU RAN OUT ON THOMAS. IF I WAS GOING TO INVEST IN UPGRADING YOU, I NEEDED TO BE SURE YOU WOULDN'T RUN OFF ON ME.
THE POWER CORE I INSTALLED IN YOU IS *UNSTABLE,* AND IT'S NOT A CLEAN LITTLE SOLAR CORE ANYMORE, BUT *NUCLEAR.*
YOU *WILL* OBEY MY *EVERY* COMMAND, OR I WON'T MAINTAIN YOUR SYSTEMS. WANDER AWAY AGAIN, AND WHEN YOUR CORE GIVES OUT, WELL...
...WHO *KNOWS* HOW MANY YOU'LL TAKE WITH YOU?
SO! WHAT'S THE FIRST THING YOU'RE GOING TO DO FOR ME?
=ahem=
HA HA HA HA!

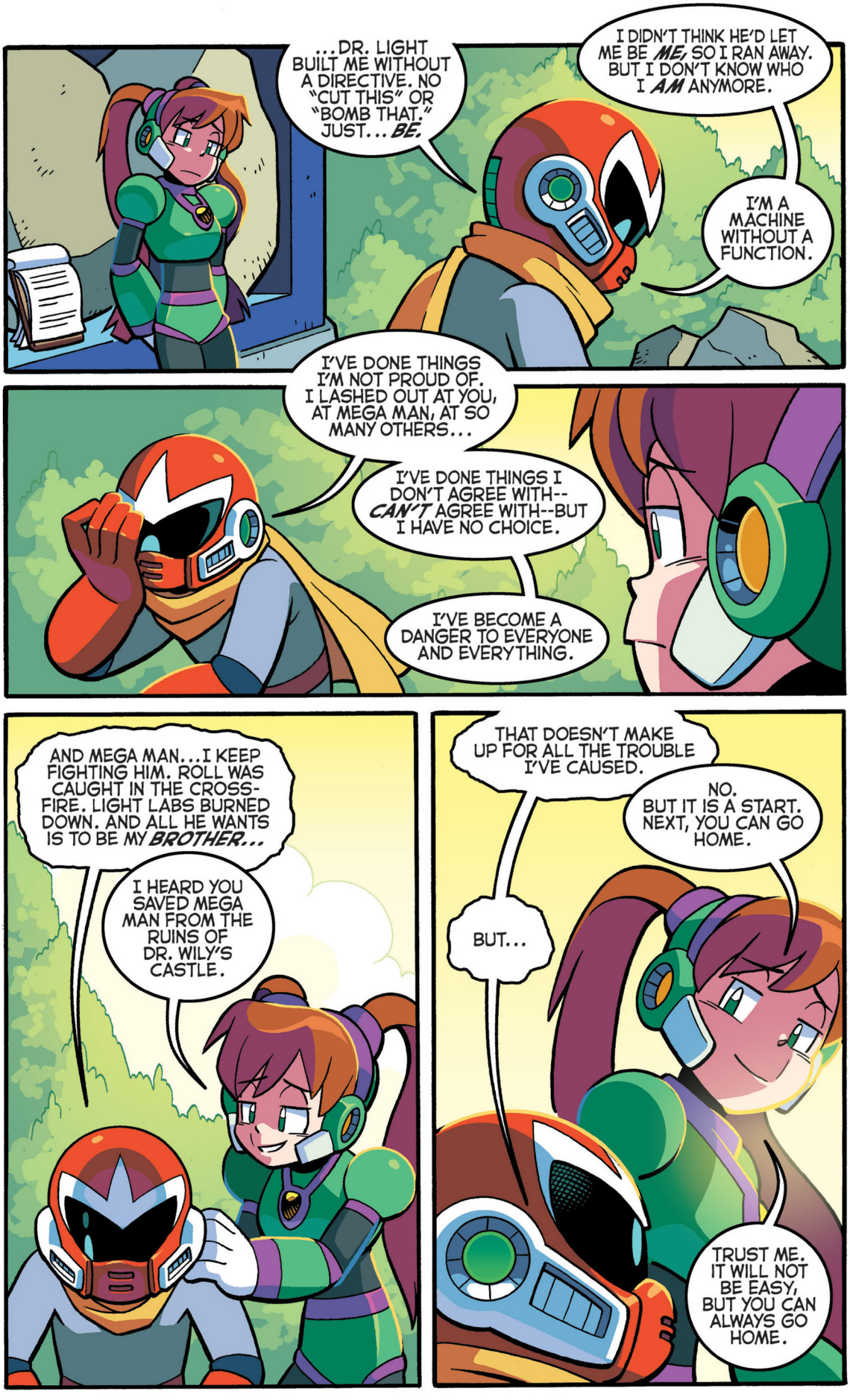

SAINT PETERSBURG, RUSSIA...
I'M PRINCESS OF THE CASTLE!
ALL OF YOU HAVE TO BOW TO ME NOW!
NOT THIS AGAIN...
WE'RE TIRED OF PLAYING CASTLES, KALINKA!
UNLESS IT'S A CASTLE OF MONKEYS! OOH-OOH! AHH-AHH!
MONKEYS ARE STUPID...
ARE NOT! OOK! EEK!
IF PHARAOH MAN WERE HERE, HE'D PLAY CASTLES AND PRINCESSES WITH ME...
CASTLES! PRINCESSES! HA-HA!
WHO--?
HA-HA!
WHAT A FUNNY ROBOT BIRD! HERE, BIRDIE!
HA-HA!

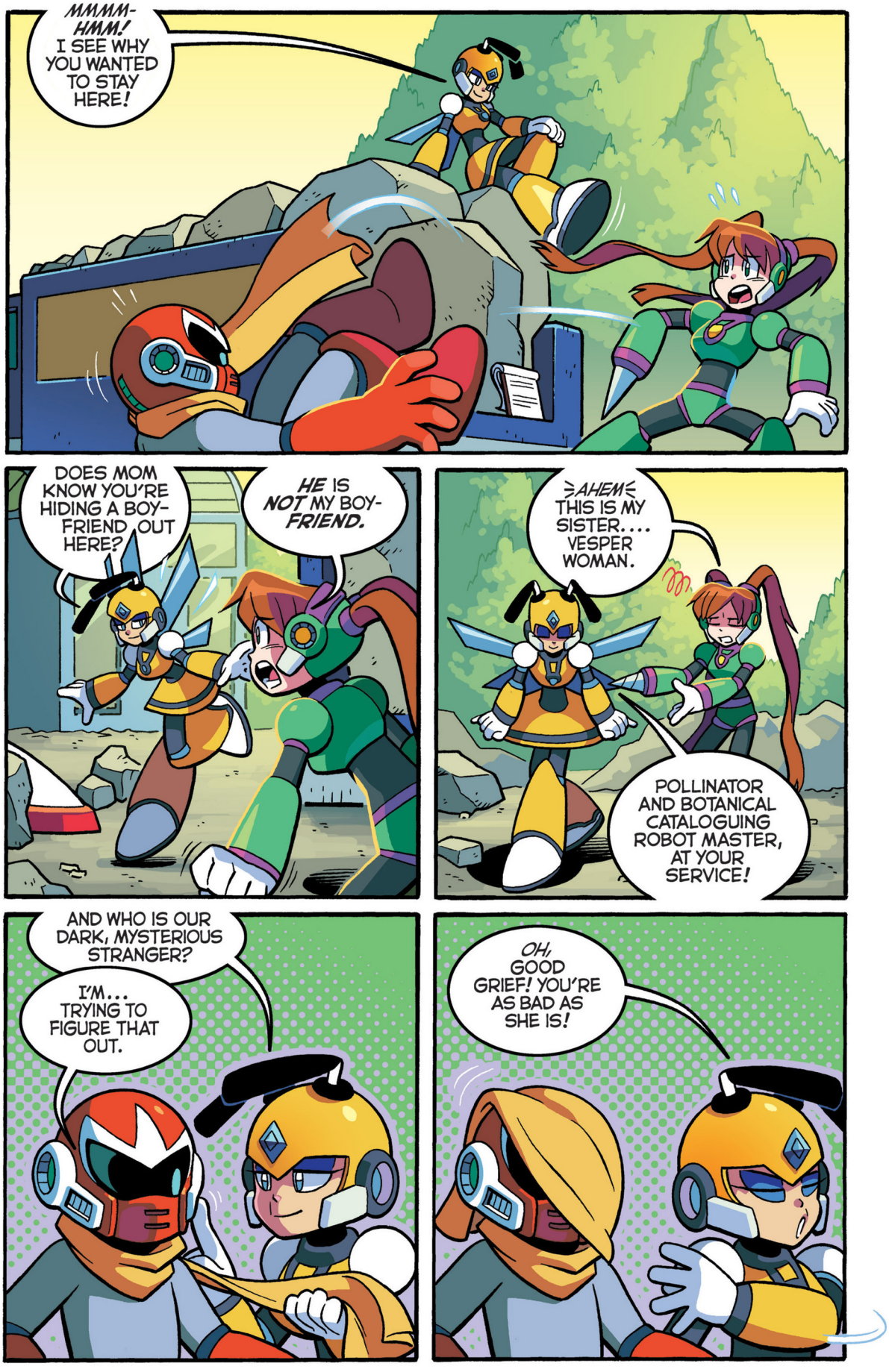

HELLO! IS THAT YOUR BIRD?
NO. I WAS ASKED TO TAKE IT FOR A...TEST FLIGHT.
SNICKER!
I GET IT! THAT'S FUNNY!
YOU SHOULDN'T LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS.
I KNOW, BUT...MY DADDY IS WORKING ON A ROBOT BIRD DESIGN, AND YOURS IS ALREADY FINISHED! I JUST WANTED TO SEE!
HOW DO YOU CONTROL IT?
I'LL SHOW YOU. FIRST, PUT THIS ON.
OOH! IS IT SOME KIND OF CONTROLLER?
NO...IT'S A TELEPORT HARNESS.
BWOO-WIP!

"EXCELLENT WORK, BREAK MAN!"
I KNEW YOU WOULDN'T FAIL ME. YOU JUST NEEDED THE PROPER MOTIVATION!
WITH SHADOW MAN BUSY OVERSEEING MY CASTLE'S CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTAINING HIS COVER AT THE OBSERVATORY, I'LL NEED YOU FOR MY ERRANDS.
NOW, THEN-- I'VE GOT A CALL TO MAKE.
I'M SURE HER DADDY IS WORRIED SICK--
--HEH HEH HEH!
I-I'M A P-PRINCESS... A KNIGHT WILL C-COME RESCUE M-ME...
HA HAHA HA!
WHAM!


LATER...
GEO WORKS INTERNATIONAL, PHILIPPINES...
C'MON! YOU SAID YOU'D COME!
I SAID I WOULD ASSIST WITH YOUR BOTANICAL CATALOGUING AFTER I FINISHED MY GEOLOGICAL SAMPLES.
VESPER WOMAN LMN-002
QUAKE WOMAN LMN-001
UGH! I WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CAN FIND ROCKS SO INTEREST-ING!
I WAS PROGRAMMED TO. I WILL NEVER UNDERSTAND WHY YOU DON'T PROCESS THAT.
FINE! MAYBE I'LL GO BY MYSELF!
YES. DO US BOTH THE FAVOR.
WAS THAT SARCASM?!
MAYBE.
UGH! I CAN NEVER TELL WITH YOU!
NEITHER CAN I. THAT'S THE PROBLEM...
CAP COM
YOU'RE MAKING PROGRESS.

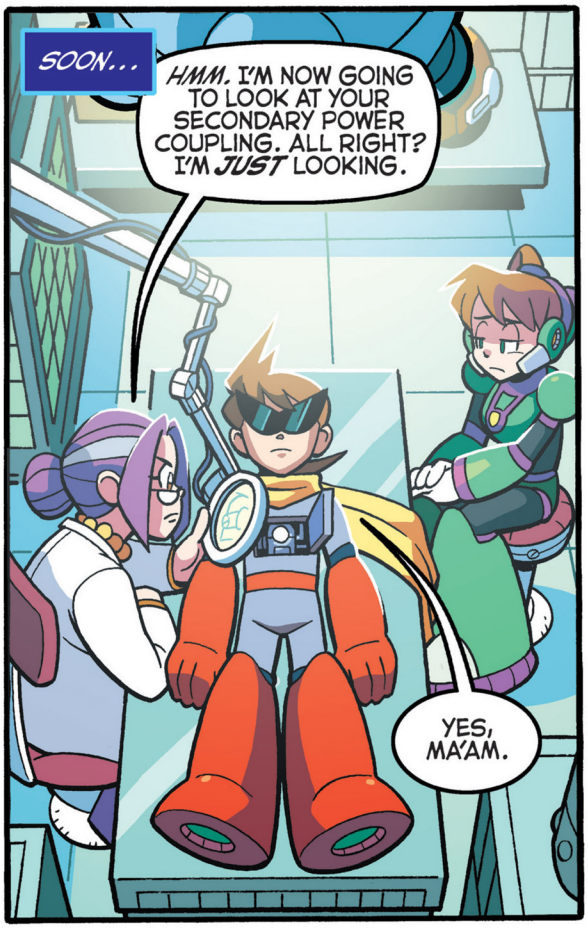
OH? WHY DO YOU SAY THAT?
BECAUSE I CAN CLEARLY TELL YOU'RE NOT HAPPY TO SEE ME.
I'M SORRY. I KNOW I WASN'T... COURTEOUS LAST TIME...*
YOU PUNCHED A HOLE IN THE WALL. YOU BROKE A PICTURE. THIS IS NOTHING COMPARED TO BURNING DOWN LIGHT LABS, HOWEVER.
I...I DIDN'T DO THAT...I...
*MEGA MAN # 35.
I'M SORRY! I JUST...I DON'T KNOW WHERE ELSE TO GO! YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE I'VE EVER TALKED TO ABOUT...ANY-THING!
NEVER MIND. IT WAS STUPID TO COME HERE.
NO. WAIT. STAY. I'LL LISTEN.
I'VE NO RIGHT TO...
I'LL LISTEN.

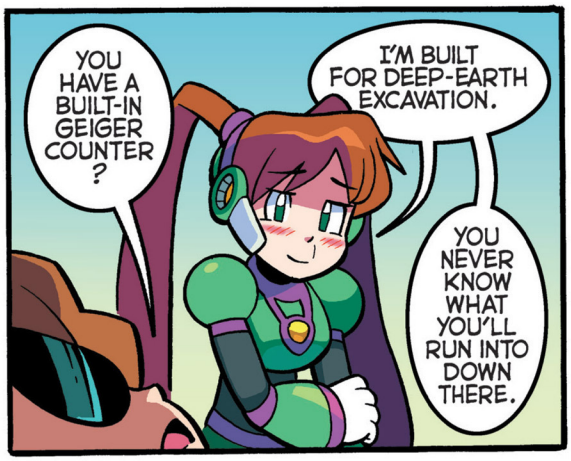

...DR. LIGHT BUILT ME WITHOUT A DIRECTIVE. NO "CUT THIS" OR "BOMB THAT." JUST... BE.
I DIDN'T THINK HE'D LET ME BE ME, SO I RAN AWAY. BUT I DON'T KNOW WHO I AM ANYMORE.
I'M A MACHINE WITHOUT A FUNCTION.
I'VE DONE THINGS I'M NOT PROUD OF. I LASHED OUT AT YOU, AT MEGA MAN, AT SO MANY OTHERS...
I'VE DONE THINGS I DON'T AGREE WITH-- CAN'T AGREE WITH--BUT I HAVE NO CHOICE.
I'VE BECOME A DANGER TO EVERYONE AND EVERYTHING.
AND MEGA MAN...I KEEP FIGHTING HIM. ROLL WAS CAUGHT IN THE CROSS-FIRE. LIGHT LABS BURNED DOWN. AND ALL HE WANTS IS TO BE MY BROTHER...
I HEARD YOU SAVED MEGA MAN FROM THE RUINS OF DR. WILY'S CASTLE.
THAT DOESN'T MAKE UP FOR ALL THE TROUBLE I'VE CAUSED.
NO. BUT IT IS A START. NEXT, YOU CAN GO HOME.
BUT...
TRUST ME. IT WILL NOT BE EASY, BUT YOU CAN ALWAYS GO HOME.

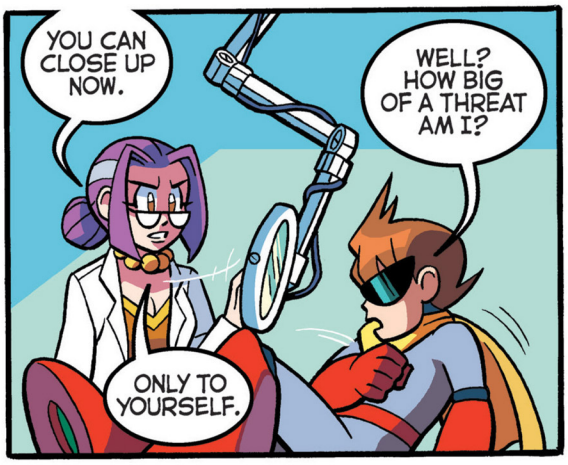

MMMM-HMM! I SEE WHY YOU WANTED TO STAY HERE!
DOES MOM KNOW YOU'RE HIDING A BOY-FRIEND OUT HERE?
HE IS NOT MY BOY-FRIEND.
≥AHEM≤ THIS IS MY SISTER.... VESPER WOMAN.
POLLINATOR AND BOTANICAL CATALOGUING ROBOT MASTER, AT YOUR SERVICE!
AND WHO IS OUR DARK, MYSTERIOUS STRANGER?
I'M... TRYING TO FIGURE THAT OUT.
OH, GOOD GRIEF! YOU'RE AS BAD AS SHE IS!

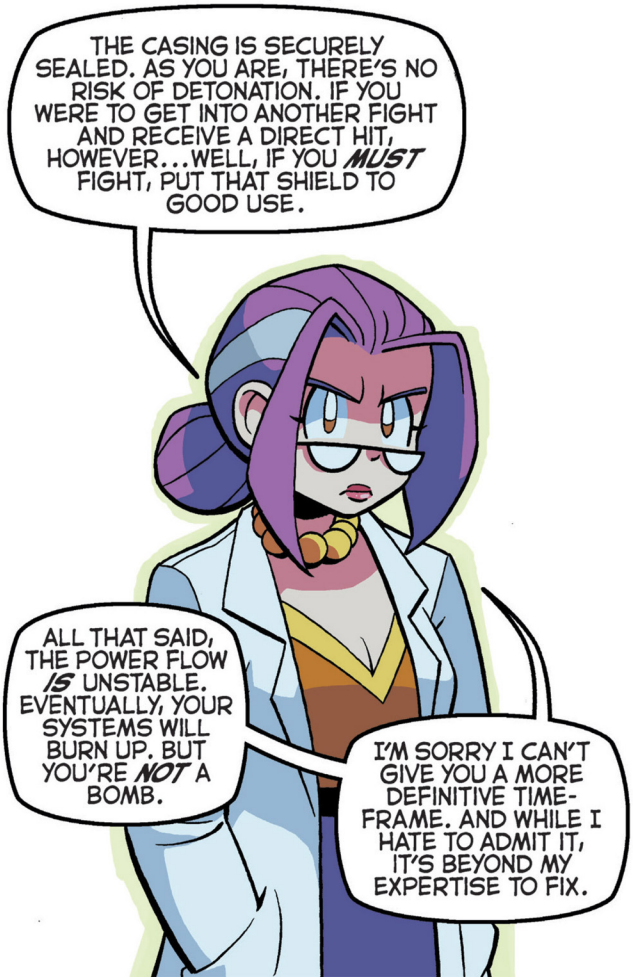
SHE'S NEW.
DOCTOR LALINDE COMPLETED ONE OF DR. LIGHT'S UNUSED ROBOT MASTERS TO PROVIDE MORE FAMILIAL INTERACTION. SHE HOPED IT WOULD HELP RESTORE WHO I ONCE WAS.
IS IT WORKING?
SHE... FRUSTRATES ME.
WHICH IS GOOD, BECAUSE IT'S A CLEAR EMOTIONAL RESPONSE!
IT IS COMPLICATED.
YEAH, WELL, LOVE IS COMPLICATED, SIS. AND IF *BUGGING* YOU MAKES YOU "*YOU*" AGAIN, THEN IT'S A GOOD THING I'M WASP-THEMED!
...SHE HAS HELPED ME FIND MY APPRECIATION FOR LAME JOKES.
LAME?!
LAME.
IF DR. LALINDE WILL GO THIS FAR TO HELP YOU...THEN MAYBE... MAYBE SHE CAN HELP ME.
PLEASE --MAY I SPEAK WITH HER?
MMM-HMMM. SURE, MYSTERY MAN. I'LL LET HER KNOW YOU'RE HERE.

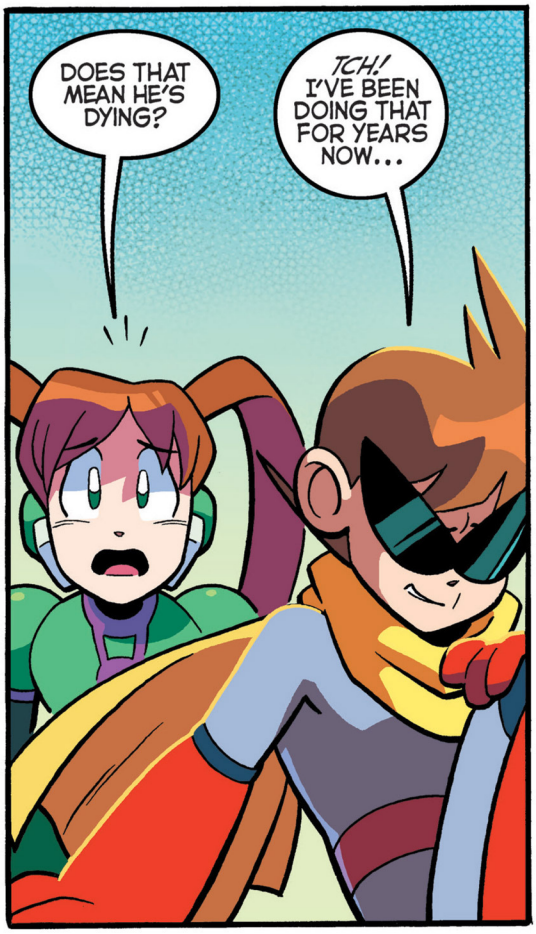
HEY, MOM! TEMPO'S GOT A GENTLEMAN CALLER!
WHAT IN THE WORLD...?
STOP THAT.
DR. NOELE LALINDE
GEOLOGIST & ROBOTICIST
BLUES?!
H-HELLO, DR. LALINDE. I'M SORRY FOR THE TROUBLE I CAUSED YOU BEFORE. I... I NEED YOUR HELP.
IS THAT SO? YOU HAVE A LOT TO ANSWER FOR, YOU KNOW.
YES, MA'AM. I WILL. I JUST NEED TO KNOW ...WELL...
WHEN DR. WILY MODIFIED MY SYSTEMS, HE GAVE ME A NUCLEAR CORE. I'VE LEARNED IT'S UNSTABLE. I NEED TO KNOW... HOW FAR AWAY I NEED TO GO TO PROTECT EVERYONE.
TEMPO?
I'M NOT READING ANY DANGEROUS LEVELS OF RADIATION. I THINK HE'S STABLE FOR NOW.
LET'S MAKE SURE OF THAT. FOLLOW ME.

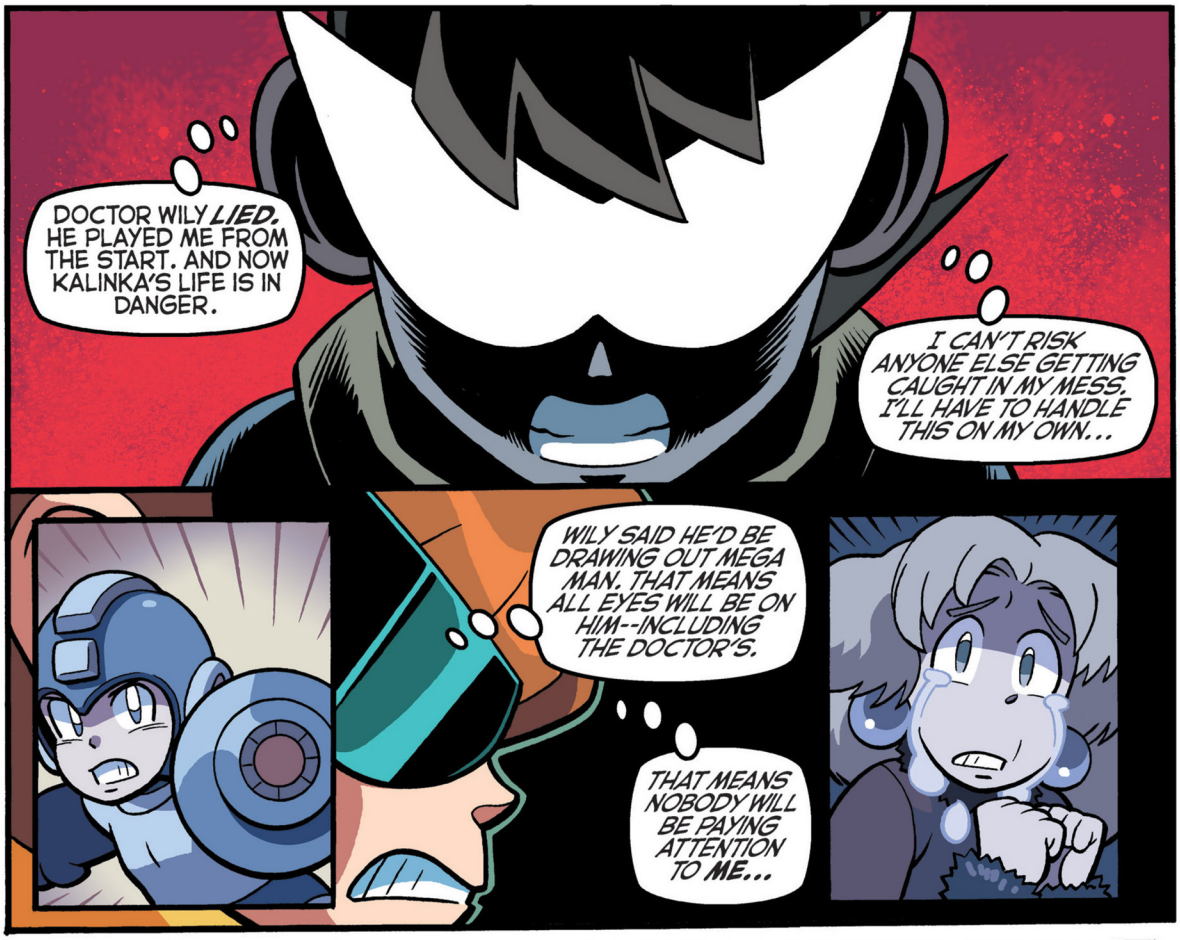

SOON...
HMM. I'M NOW GOING TO LOOK AT YOUR SECONDARY POWER COUPLING. ALL RIGHT? I'M JUST LOOKING.
YES, MA'AM.

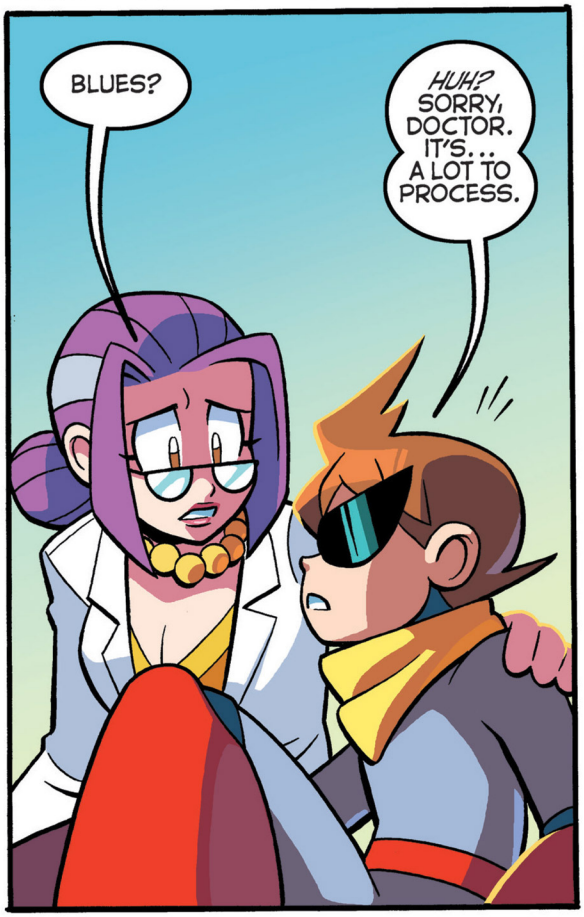

YOU HAVE A BUILT-IN GEIGER COUNTER?
I'M BUILT FOR DEEP-EARTH EXCAVATION.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT YOU'LL RUN INTO DOWN THERE.

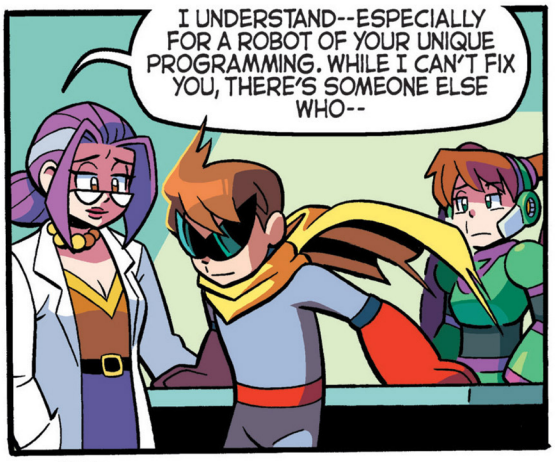

YOU CAN CLOSE UP NOW.
WELL? HOW BIG OF A THREAT AM I?
ONLY TO YOURSELF.


THE CASING IS SECURELY SEALED. AS YOU ARE, THERE'S NO RISK OF DETONATION. IF YOU WERE TO GET INTO ANOTHER FIGHT AND RECEIVE A DIRECT HIT, HOWEVER...WELL, IF YOU MUST FIGHT, PUT THAT SHIELD TO GOOD USE.
ALL THAT SAID, THE POWER FLOW IS UNSTABLE. EVENTUALLY, YOUR SYSTEMS WILL BURN UP. BUT YOU'RE NOT A BOMB.
I'M SORRY I CAN'T GIVE YOU A MORE DEFINITIVE TIME-FRAME. AND WHILE I HATE TO ADMIT IT, IT'S BEYOND MY EXPERTISE TO FIX.


DOES THAT MEAN HE'S DYING?
TCH! I'VE BEEN DOING THAT FOR YEARS NOW...


DOCTOR WILY *LIED.* HE PLAYED ME FROM THE START. AND NOW KALINKA'S LIFE IS IN DANGER.
I CAN'T RISK ANYONE ELSE GETTING CAUGHT IN MY MESS. I'LL HAVE TO HANDLE THIS ON MY OWN...
WILY SAID HE'D BE DRAWING OUT MEGA MAN. THAT MEANS ALL EYES WILL BE ON HIM--INCLUDING THE DOCTOR'S.
*THAT MEANS NOBODY WILL BE PAYING ATTENTION TO **ME**...*


BLUES?
HUH? SORRY, DOCTOR. IT'S... A LOT TO PROCESS.


I UNDERSTAND--ESPECIALLY FOR A ROBOT OF YOUR UNIQUE PROGRAMMING. WHILE I CAN'T FIX YOU, THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE WHO--

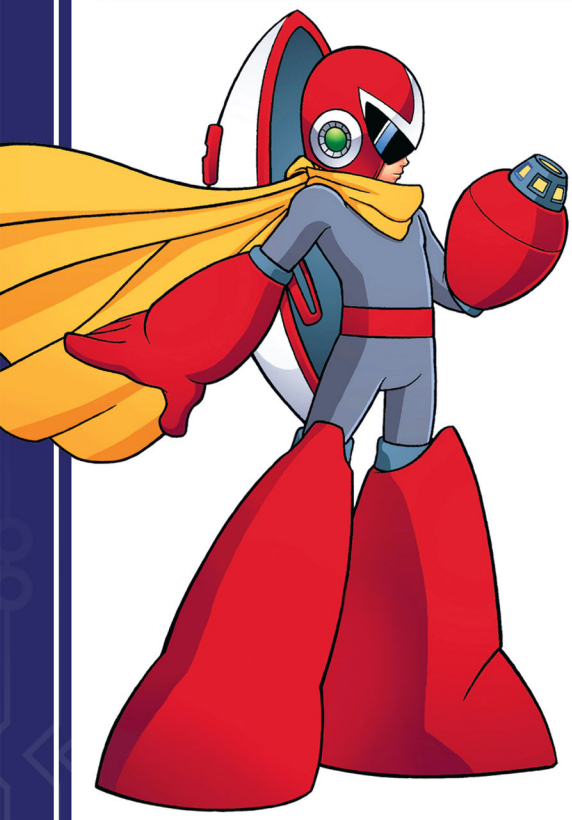
YOU MEAN DOCTOR LIGHT.
NO, I HAVEN'T EARNED THE RIGHT TO ASK ANYTHING OF HIM YET.

YOU DON'T *HAVE* TO EARN IT! HE LOVES YOU. HE ALWAYS HAS.
I REALIZE THAT NOW. I HAVE TO EARN IT FOR MYSELF.
PLEASE DON'T TELL HIM I'VE BEEN HERE, OR WHAT YOU FOUND. I...I DON'T WANT TO WORRY HIM.
≥*SIGH*≤ SUCH A MISPLACED, CHIVALROUS MARTYR COMPLEX. YOU *ARE* YOUR FATHER'S SON.
NO. NOT YET. I'VE NOT EARNED THE RIGHT TO THAT, EITHER.
CRACK!

MAYBE ONE DAY I CAN GO BACK TO BEING BLUES.
FOR NOW, I'M JUST THE FIRST OF MY LINE. THE PROTO-TYPE TO THE ROBOT MASTERS. I AM--
--PROTO MAN!
THE WANDERING RED ROBOT HAS FINALLY FOUND HIS DIRECTION!
JOIN US NEXT TIME FOR AN EXTRA-SPECIAL MEGA MAN #55--
"FOR EVERLASTING PEACE!"

Letter from the EDITOR

Editorial commentary that's been "proto-typed" with care!



Hey, Mega fans!

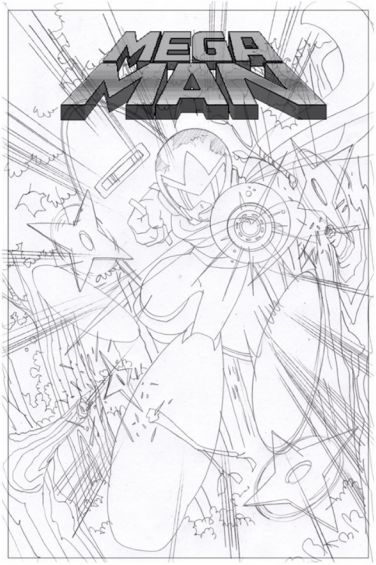
I hope you all enjoyed "Red Shift" as much as I did! After dozens of instances where **Blues** has fought with himself over who he wanted to be and what he wanted to do as **Break Man**, it's so satisfying to finally see him following his own path as **Proto Man!** A big hand to **Ian, Ryan, Gary, John, Matt** and **Jon** for making the official debut of Proto Man so incredibly epic!

I'd also like to share with everyone this behind-the-scenes look at the production of the main cover for this special issue. The legendary **Patrick "Spaz" Spaziante** had two awesome options for this issue's cover, seen here, both are so full of drama and energy, it was tough to choose! Also, artist **Brent McCarthy** offered his talents on the chilling **"I Am Proto Man"** variant cover, check out his initial sketch below!

It has been an honor to work on this story with everyone and I can't be prouder of how it turned out!

– Vincent "Vin" Lovallo
Editor

BELOW: Spaz's first sketch option which became the final cover for *Mega Man* #54.



BELOW: Spaz's alternate sketch option for the main cover of *Mega Man* #54.

BELOW: Brent McCarthy's initial sketch for the variant cover of *Mega Man* #54.

MEGA MAIL PRESENTS

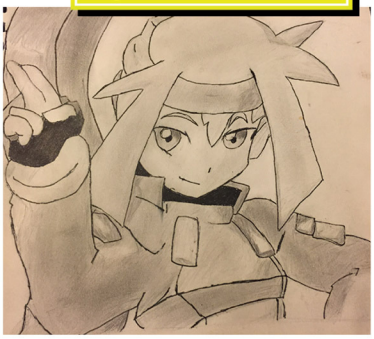
MASTER WORKS

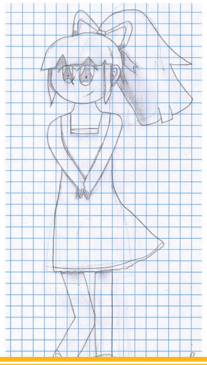
YOUR MEGA MAN FAN ART

Arnae H. *from Minnesota*

Mateo M. *sent to MegaMan@ArchieComics.com*

Icesera W. *sent to MegaMan@ArchieComics.com*





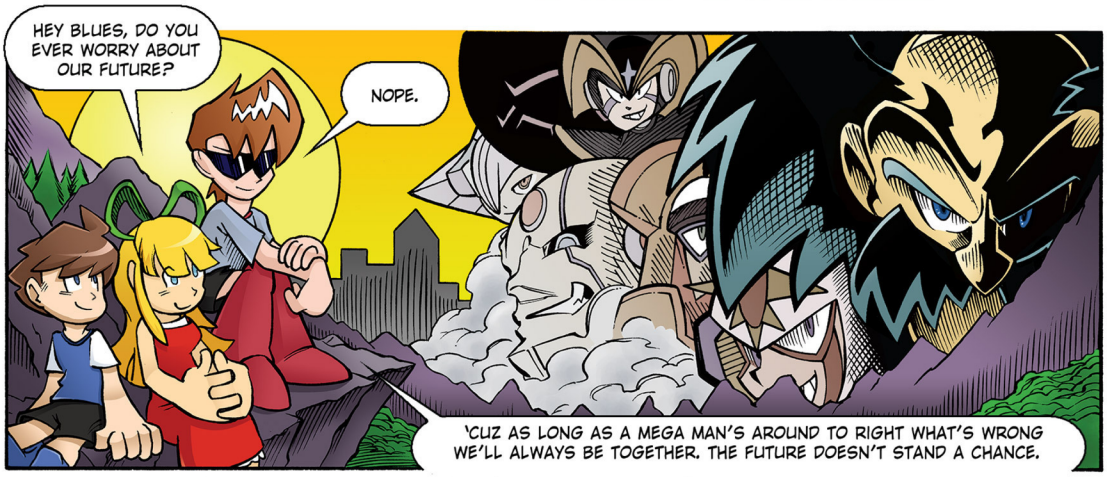
Rafaela A. *sent to MegaMan@ArchieComics.com*

Skyler M. *sent to MegaMan@ArchieComics.com*

ART WILL NOT BE RETURNED. SPACE LIMITATIONS MAY REQUIRE SOME PRINTED ART TO BE EDITED. ALL YOUR LETTERS & FAN ART ARE APPRECIATED!

-SHORT-CIRCUITS

REDS AND BLUES OR PULP FUTURE


HEY BLUES, DO YOU EVER WORRY ABOUT OUR FUTURE?
NOPE.
'CUZ AS LONG AS A MEGA MAN'S AROUND TO RIGHT WHAT'S WRONG WE'LL ALWAYS BE TOGETHER. THE FUTURE DOESN'T STAND A CHANCE.

SCRIPT & PENCILS: *JONATHAN H. GRAY* INKS: *RICK BRYANT* COLORS: *ALEAH BAKER*

MEGA MAIL

WRITE TO US @: MEGA-MAIL C/O ARCHIE COMIC PUBLICATIONS, INC. 629 FIFTH AVENUE, SUITE 100 PELHAM, NY 10803-1242 E-MAIL: MEGAMAN@ARCHIECOMICS.COM OR TWEET AT US USING #MEGAMAIL!

Dear 'Mega Mail,'
Mega Man #53 asks the question, "what's a hero without a villain?" Well, still a hero, just in less obvious ways. Not in the enemies he's defeated, but in the friends he's made and world he's built. It's nice to see what Robot Masters are up to when they're not blowing each other up. It was also weird to see Guts and Concrete Man okay with being deactivated. Wouldn't they resent Rock because he has special consideration?

Interesting question, but not likely. Part of the conflict presented dealt with what a robot would do once its function was fulfilled—be at peace with itself or strive for more. For Guts and Concrete Man, their answer was blunt, but simple.

As always we get a great characterization of Rock as the conflicted hero. He wants peace and justice foremost, but is willing to do something he hates to get to it. It was nice seeing his reaction to the Robot Masters ranging from bittersweet to childish joy to disappointment. I was surprised by how in the end it was Fire Man who cheers him up. That said, it was eerie seeing the deactivated Robot Masters but I'm glad to see Dr. Wily is already planning ahead to Mega Man 5! The high five scene with him and Shadow Man was priceless!

The doctor's a selfish, egocentric, egomaniacal loon—but he's a FUN selfish, egocentric, egomaniacal loon!

It's also interesting to see how Xander Payne has been reworked to fit into the games' canon. I also liked the young Dr. Light and Dr. Wily scene. Maybe we can get an "AI and Tom's Excellent Adventure" side story? Also, just what is this dark episode in Wily's past that everyone keeps talking about?

Sincerely,
Jonathan G. sent to
MegaMan@ArchieComics.com

Dr. Wily's always let his selfish desires get in the way of his common sense, Jonathan! Perhaps someday the tale of what set him down his dark path can be told...

Dear 'Mega Mail,'
Mega Man has been getting more and more quality recently. The periods surrounding "Worlds Unite" have some great art!! Especially the "Ultimate Betrayal" arc with its color renderings and stuff!!

Well thank you for that glowing review! I'm certain that the colorist for the "Ultimate Betrayal" arc, Ms. Evan Stanley, will appreciate your high praise!

I love how Archie Comics is evolving recently with all the titles including the new *Archie* series! May I ask if we'll be able to get some solo or mini series... or even just a mashup... of all the Mega Man versions? I'm still waiting for my favorite Mega Man Zero to appear! Hahaha!! and also... don't forget... "All the Mega Man versions in a story arc" *wink wink* Hahaha!! I proudly support you guys! Thank you again!

Bruce S. sent to
MegaMan@ArchieComics.com

Thanks, Bruce! Hmmm... maybe you and the rest of our super amazing fans should take a good long look at our "next issue" page...

Dear 'Mega Mail,'
Hello to whoever answers the fan mail. What is your favorite part of your job and who is your idol?

Kiera R. sent to
MegaMan@ArchieComics.com

Kiera, that's sweet! Thank you for thinking of the man behind the curtain! My favorite part of this job is answering letters from cool people like you! And as far as my idol goes... that's a toughie.

Y'see, I'm not sure what my Increased Degradation of LDL Receptor Proteins (IDOL), a ubiquitin ligase that ubiquinates LDL receptors in endosomes which directs the receptors to the lysosomal compartments for degradation, has to do with Mega Man, but... I guess I'll have to get back to you on that!

Until then, see y'all next issue!

CHECK OUT MORE AWESOME TITLES FROM Archie ACTION!

EVERLASTING PEACE